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1300.01 General

The *roadside* is the area outside the traveled way. This applies to all lands managed by WSDOT and may extend to elements outside the right of way boundaries.¹ This includes unpaved median strips and auxiliary facilities such as rest areas, roadside parks, viewpoints, heritage markers, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, wetlands and their associated buffer areas, stormwater treatment facilities, park and ride lots, and quarries and pit sites.

The roadside is managed to fulfill operational, environmental, visual and auxiliary functions. In reality, these functions are interrelated and inseparable. However, the four categories help communicate the range of roadside management issues.

- **Operational functions** are functions that provide safe, multiuse roadsides. Operational functions include access control, and providing recovery areas and sight distances with accommodations for signs and utilities.
- **Environmental functions** are those roadside functions that protect and enhance our natural and built surroundings. Environmental functions include water quality preservation and improvement, stormwater detention and retention, wetland and sensitive area

¹ WSDOT owns and manages the land within the right of way boundaries. WSDOT also owns, or has partial investment in, properties outside of the right of way boundaries; for example, wetland mitigation sites. In addition, WSDOT has an interest in elements outside the right of way boundaries which may affect roadway safety.

protection, noxious weed control, noise control, habitat preservation, air quality improvement, and erosion control.

- **Visual functions** are those roadside functions that are designed and experienced primarily from a visual perspective. Visual functions promote a positive quality of life and are integral to operational, environmental, and auxiliary functions. They include positive guidance and navigation, distraction screening, corridor continuity, roadway and adjacent property buffering, and scenic view preservation.
- **Auxiliary functions** are those roadside functions that provide additional operational, environmental, and visual functions for a complete transportation system. Examples of auxiliary functions include community enhancement areas, safety rest areas, roadside parks, viewpoints, agricultural uses, historic markers, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, park and ride lots, and maintenance facilities.

One element can provide multiple functions simultaneously. Roadside functions are described in greater detail in the *Roadside Manual*, (M 25-30).

The design level planning effort of a roadside project incorporates site conditions, commitments, the extent of need, and available funding. Roadside development concepts covered elsewhere in the *Design Manual* are:

- Signs (Chapter 820)
- Safety rest areas, roadside parks, view-points, and historical markers (Chapter 1030)
- Retaining walls (Chapter 1130)
- Noise barriers (Chapter 1140)
- Roadside safety (Chapter 700)
- Traffic barriers (Chapter 710)
- Contour grading (Chapter 1310)
- Vegetation (Chapter 1320)

- Irrigation (Chapter 1330)
- Fencing (Chapter 1460)
- Utilities (*Utilities Manual and Utilities Accommodation Policy*)

It is WSDOT policy to employ roadside treatments for the protection and restoration of roadside character as designated in the *Roadside Classification Plan*.

1300.02 References

Roadside Classification Plan, M 25-31, WSDOT

Roadside Manual, M 25-30, WSDOT

Utilities Accommodation Policy, M 22-86, WSDOT

Utilities Manual, M 22-87, WSDOT

Roadside Design Guide, AASHTO

1300.03 Roadside Classification Plan

The *Roadside Classification Plan* coordinates and guides the management of Washington State highway roadsides within a framework of roadside character classifications. It provides guidelines for roadside restoration and advocates the use of native plants, integrated vegetation management (IVM), and a long-term management approach to achieve sustainable roadsides.

1300.04 Roadside Manual

The *Roadside Manual* provides a link and coordination between all WSDOT partners responsible for roadside activities, and establishes a common basis for consistent roadside management decisions statewide.

It also establishes a convenient and accessible reference for new and previously unpublished material related to roadside management including planning, design, construction, and maintenance. In addition, the manual supplements statewide roadside guidelines established in the *Roadside Classification Plan*.

The *Roadside Manual* includes information on, or references to:

- Federal, state, and departmental roadside law and policy.

- Considerations such as the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Heritage Corridors Program and Scenic Byways.
- Roadside treatments such as erosion control, contour grading, rock cuts, soil bioengineering, wetland mitigation, and revegetation.
- Right of way issues such as commercial impacts, view exposure, agricultural uses, acquisitions, and scenic easements.
- Partnerships such as Adopt a Highway.

See the *Roadside Manual* table of contents for more information on the contents of the manual.

1300.05 Design Requirements

For all projects outside the roadway edge, consult the region's Landscape Architect, or the OSC Region Liaison Landscape Architect in regions without a Landscape Architect. The Landscape Architects can help coordinate all the various aspects of roadside projects including siting and design for maintenance facilities, safety rest areas, noise berms, noise walls, and revegetation, restoration, and wetland mitigation projects.

For any work in, or near wetlands, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act may apply.

The act requires a permit to discharge dredge or fill into most waters of the United States, including wetlands. The Section 404 permitting process requires advanced planning and coordination with the permitting agency: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

1300.06 Documentation

Document all roadside projects with a project file (see Chapter 330 for information on design documentation and design approval levels). A roadside project file may include the following documents:

- Site analysis
 - Soils
 - Soil boring logs
 - Climate
 - Slopes

- Aspect (north facing slope, for example)
- Vegetation present (species, percentage of each species, location, health)
- Adjacent land uses
- Location of any surface water bodies
- Movement of water
- Views into and out of site
- General impressions
- Conceptual diagrams
- Preliminary plans
- Final PS&E
- Decision documentation; for example:
 - Jurisdictional requirements
 - Commitments
 - Soil analysis
 - Slope stability analysis
 - Hydrologic analysis
 - Horticultural reports
 - Plant availability
 - Proprietary product information

Participants in reviews for roadside projects may include:

- OSC Region Liaison Landscape Architect
- Maintenance Office
- Construction Office
- OSC Horticulturist
- Region's Traffic Office
- Region's Project Development Office
- Environmental Office
- Affected Community Groups

The OSC Region Liaison Landscape Architect is also available for roadside design in regions without a regional Landscape Architect.

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1300.07 Design Recommendations

The region's Landscape Architect designs and approves revegetation plans. They are available for assistance on any roadside projects. A review of preliminary plans to provide additional perspective on the design is recommended at the following roadside project benchmarks:

- Shortly after field data has been collected - consists of site analysis and conceptual diagrams
- Preliminary plans
- Final PS&E plans

These reviews help to ease the final PS&E process.